

## **State of the Town – January 19, 2017**

### **Bullet Points from Supervisor Casilio State of the Town:**

My first year as supervisor has been a very successful year and it would not have been possible without great Town Employees, great Department Heads and great fellow elected officials. Without a doubt my assistant Karen Jurek has helped me hit the ground running for 2016.

### **Accomplishments in 2016**

Last year for State of the Town I talked about future Town projects and I am happy to say they have started and are on budget and have been on schedule.

This summer (2017) the new Public Safety Building will be completed and ready for the State Police, Erie County Sheriff's and the Town of Clarence Courts to move in. The State Police are moving Zone II back to Clarence have a 20-year lease with the Town of Clarence. Our Court will now be a safer place for all concerned, besides being updated, they will have the Sheriff and State Police on site. A special thanks to Tim Lavocat and Larry Meckler for making the new building a reality.

The Main Street Town Park, has a new public bathroom that was completed and is open for use. Besides being new and improved, it is much larger to handle our many Town events and it is heated for year round use. Many residents use the Park or bike trails during the winter, so with heat, this bathroom services our residents all year long. Property the Town bought several years ago to the West of the Main Street Park is being cleared for public use by Town Parks and Highway employees. When completed late spring, almost 6 acres of new property will be added to the Main Street Park. My hopes is the new area will handle parking for the pool and major Town events at the Park.

Pickle Ball Courts have been added to the Town Place Park.

Our trail system is one of the most heavily used areas of our park system and it has expanded again. A Bike path extension throughout Spaulding Green is weeks away from being open to the public. The Waterford bike path extension has been completed allowing Waterford residents access to the Peanut Line Trail. Northwood's development has started, which also includes a soon to be constructed bike trail from Roll Road to Greiner.

The Town was awarded a grant for sidewalk improvements on Main Street. When this project is completed our residents will be able to walk the entire length of Main Street on safe sidewalks. In the Harris Hill area especially, this project will open entire neighborhoods to the businesses on Main Street like Dash's. The ground breaking is planned for this spring with work completed by late fall. The Town Board will be reviewing a sidewalk district to help keep the sidewalks free of snow during the winter months.

The Town also received grant funding for more sewer extensions in the Hollow. Alexander and Elmcroft Court are under design now for new sewers. Sewer District 9 is under a consent order so with this new work over 90 percent of that order has been corrected with the additional sewers.

Our Highway Department lead by Superintendent Dussing has paved over 11 miles of roads last year and he has planned the same for this year. The Highway Department will continue with on-going work on the North Clarence Flood Reduction Program and plans more miles of ditch maintenance for this year to help control water in the North Country.

Our Comprehensive Plan, now called 2030 is in place thanks to the hard work by Jim Callahan and Jonathan Bleuer. Jim will be highlighting the plan in a few minutes. He will also be talking about Vision Main Street which was an IDA sponsored study on our Main street corridor. This study will be used to obtain future grants for the betterment and redevelopment of Main Street.

The Town of Clarence has an overlay plan for Eastern Hills Mall. A Life Style Center which basically is a City within a Town. The Town of Clarence is ready to go when Eastern Hills has their plans in place to move forward. Jim has a slide on that also.

Good news for Eastern Hills Mall, even though Sears closed two major stores in the area our Sears store is staying open.

The Zombie law changed last month. The Abandoned Property Neighborhood Relief Act will allow our code enforcement department to move quickly in enforcing current laws requiring property maintenance. The Town is moving forward with condemnation of its first Zombie Home for demolition.

### **Youth and Recreation Programs**

Our Youth Programs lead by Dawn Kinney and Recreation Programs lead by Clifford Trapper have had thousands of Clarence's young person's participating. Over 7,000 volunteer hours have been given back to the Town by these young people.

The Youth Bureau had 68 youth programs for children from ages 3 to 12 years old. 1,100 children participate in those programs.

The Youth Court tried over 56 cases last year. With the help of Judge Powers the youth board continues to raise awareness of our local drug problems. Judge Powers Drug Court helps hundreds of offenders take a different path toward rehabilitation. Thank you Judge Powers for helping these people get a second chance at straightening their life out.

Our Recreation Program had 500 people participate last year. With the addition of Pickle Ball to our program I expect that number only to climb next year.

Our pool had its busiest year in a long time. Almost 18,000 times residents were swimming in the pool; one day had over 600 people using the pool.

Our Town leagues again had over 3,500 kids participating in Soccer, Baseball, Softball and Football. Our Parks Department lead by Jim Burkard has our fields prepared to the best of any other playing fields in the league system.

### **Financials for Clarence**

Again, last year our Department Heads came in under budget. This helped with the 2017 budget which is under the tax cap. Towns were allowed only a .68 percent increase in spending for 2017. With money savings and the new assessments, the cap was obtained allowing a rebate check of approximately \$300 to go back to the Town Property Tax Payers. Town wide assessment are now \$3,859,110. The 2017 budget has kept our rate at around 95

cents a thousand. Clarence has almost, if not, the lowest tax rate in Erie County. Other Towns and Villages rates are in the dollars if not even higher. The Town of Clarence financial rating of Aa1 is the best in the area. You must go all the way to Pittsford in Rochester for a better rating. This bond rating allows the best rates possible when borrowing funds for capital projects.

#### *How is the Town growing?*

In 2006 the Town assessed value was basically one billion. Eleven years later we are at almost 4 billion.

The Town increased in value due to new construction and assessments by \$52,000,000 last year. Besides commercial projects and 350 new apartments the Town is back to building over 100 new residential homes a year.

The average home in Clarence is \$300,000 dollars/ 2,500 square feet.

There are 13,100 parcels now in Clarence.

Our Town Clerk Nancy Metzger besides her regular clerk duties has collected \$1,300,000 in various fees which include permits, fees on pavilions, clubhouse and legion, dog fees etc. has also collected \$32,000,000 in Town and County taxes and \$49,000,000 in School Taxes.

That's approximately \$82,000,000 million dollars that she closes out every night to the penny.

#### **Closing**

I love my new job as your Supervisor and as you can tell I could keep talking about our Town for hours, but at this time I would like to turn the program over to Jim Callahan who will show you our new 2030 Comprehensive plan and Vision Main Street.